

Message Text

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ACTION DPW-01

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 EA-07 IO-10 ISO-00 DHA-02 CIAE-00

DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01

PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 SCS-03 SCA-01 /083 W

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R 300918Z OCT 75

FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5513

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY MANILA

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

USMISSION GENEVA

JCRC SAMAE SAN TH

CINCPAC

CINCEUR

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE VIENTIANE 6077

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: OREP, LA, US

SUBJECT: PROPOSED TRAVEL BY HOUSE SELECT COMMITTEE ON MIAS

BANGKOK POL/MIL PASS COL. VAUGHN

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

REF: STATE 255669 (DTG 282340Z OCTNBUTL

1. WE WELCOME PROPOSED VISIT TO VIENTIANE BY HOUSE
SELECT COMMITTEE ON MIAS. SINCE OUR FILES HAVE BEEN
DESTROYED OR RETIRED WE DO NOT HAVE INFORMATION ON JUST
WHICH OFFICIALS CONGRESSMAN MONTGOMERY MET WITH DURING
HIS LAST VISIT. SOME MAY STILL BE IN PLACE AND SINCE
FOLLOW-UP VISITS MIGHT BE USEFUL WE SUGGEST DEPARTMENT
FURNISH US WITH THAT INFORMATION.

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2. WHEN WE HAVE MORE PRECISE INFORMATION ON CONGRESSIONAL PLANS WE WILL SEEK APPOINTMENTS REQUESTED. THERE IS, HOWEVER, NO PRG REPRESENTATION IN LAOS. CONGRESSMEN SHOULD BE AWARE THAT LAO COMMUNIST OFFICIALS HAVE DISPLAYED LITTLE INTEREST IN POW/MIA MATTERS OF LATE. WE HAVE NO LEVERAGE TO USE ON THEM OTHER THAN THE PRESSURE OF PUBLIC OPINION WHICH IS UNLIKELY TO HAVE VERY MUCH IMPACT. IN ADDITION THEY MAY, LIKE THEIR VIETNAMESE COMRADES, TIE ANY PROGRESS ON POW/ MIA MATTERS TO OUR DELIVERING ON WHAT THEY CONSIDER OUR PLEDGE, IN THE 1973 PARIS PEACE ACCORDS, TO ASSIST IN RECONSTRUCTION. HOUSE DELEGATION SHOULD BE PREPARED TO REPLY TO SUCH REQUESTS FOR ASSISTANCE TO "HEAL THE WOUNDS OF WAR."

3. WE AGREE WITH DEPARTMENT THAT TRAVEL TO AND FROM VIENTIANE BE ON REGULAR COMMERCIAL FLIGHTS. WE SUGGEST FURTHER THAT SUCH TRAVEL BE ON THAI AIRWAYS. RAL FLIGHTS ON MONDAY, THURSDAY AND SATURDAY USE DC-4 WHICH WE CONSIDER UNSAFE. TUESDAY FLIGHT USES CARAVELLE, BUT RAL OFTEN SUBSTITUTES DC-4 WITH NO NOTICE.

4. GIVEN SITUATION HERE WE BELIEVE IT WOULD BE BEST IF THE NUMBER OF HOUSE MEMBERS AND STAFF TRAVELING TO VIENTIANE BE KEPT TO A MINIMUM. OUR AND THE LAO'S ABILITY TO ACCOMMODATE A LARGE NUMBER OF PERSONS IS LIMITED.

5. WE BELIEVE THAT THOUGH GETTING TO AND FROM VIENTIANE MAY BE DIFFICULT AND GETTING TO SEE ANY LAO OFFICIALS WHO COUNT MAY PROVE IMPOSSIBLE (TH MOST IMPORTANT COMMUNIST PARTY OFFICIALS ARE AT VIENG SAY), THE HOUSE DELEGATION'S VISIT WILL SERVE A USEFUL PURPOSE IN REMINDING THE LAO LEADERSHIP OF THE AMERICAN PEOPLE'S CONTINUED INTEREST IN THEIR FELLOW CITIZENS WHO REMAIN UNACCOUNTED FOR IN INDOCHINA.
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